

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the present amendments and following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 21-37 are pending; Claims 21-37 are amended; and no claims are newly added or canceled herewith. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter is added by this amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 21-37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Barnard et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0103731, hereafter Barnard). For the reasons discussed below, this rejection is respectfully traversed.

As amended, independent Claim 1, recites the step of predicting a demand quantity of a product to be sold, by adding up maturity stages that have been achieved in said updated database. Independent Claims 28 and 35 recite analogous features.

Barnard relates to a system and method for product preparing a procurement and accounts payable system. However, Barnard does not disclose or suggest predicting a demand quantity of a product to be sold, by adding up maturity stages that have been achieved in said updated database. In fact, Barnard does not contemplate a determination of potential demands of products to be sold.<sup>1</sup>

Accordingly, as Barnard fails to disclose or suggest the features of independent Claims 21, 28, and 35, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 21-37 patentably distinguish over Barnard. It is therefore respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

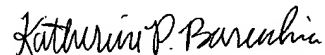
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<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., Barnard, Table 4.

Consequently, in view of the foregoing discussion and present amendments, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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